

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-20 are pending herein. Claims 1 and 13 have been amended as supported by, for example, paragraph [0030] of the present specification.

Examiner Jenkins is thanked for courtesies extended to Applicant's representative (Steven Caldwell) during a telephonic interview on April 21, 2004. During the interview, Examiner Jenkins tentatively agreed that pending claims 1 and 13, as amended above, define patentable subject matter over the applied prior art reference of record (i.e., Claussen et al.).

1. Claims 1-18 were rejected under §103(a) over Claussen et al. During the April 21, 2004 telephonic interview, Examiner Jenkins tentatively agreed that amended claims 1 and 13 (and, as such, all claims dependent therefrom) are patentably distinct over Claussen. In particular, Examiner Jenkins agreed that Claussen fails to disclose or suggest a process for forming an intermetallic compound-based composite material in which reinforcing material particles are dispersed within the intermetallic compound-based composite material, as now claimed. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

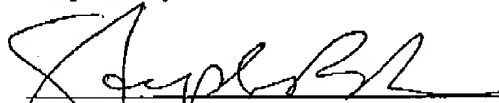
Examiner Jenkins' attention is drawn to the IDS submitted on March 31, 2004 (subsequent to the pending Office Action) citing two references for consideration by the PTO. Consideration and entry of the IDS are respectfully requested.

If Examiner Jenkins believes that contact with Applicant's attorney would be advantageous toward the disposition of this case, he is herein requested to call Applicant's attorney at the phone number noted below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-1446.

Respectfully submitted,

April 26, 2004
Date


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